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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8012th meeting of the Security Council, held on 26 July 2017, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses concern at the current political situation in light of the challenges facing the implementation of the 31 December agreement, the deterioration of the security situation, in particular in the Kasaï region, as well as the increase in abuses and violations of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in the country.

"The Security Council takes note of the appointment of a new Prime Minister, the establishment of the transitional Government, and the signing of the «Arrangements particuliers» for the implementation of the agreement by some, but not all, of the signatories of the agreement. The Security Council expresses concern at the slow implementation of the 31 December 2016 agreement. It reiterates that effective, swift and timely implementation of the Agreement is critical to a credible electoral process and the peace and stability of the DRC, as well as in supporting the legitimacy of the transitional institutions, as it represents a viable road map towards the holding of peaceful and democratic elections. The Security Council stresses the urgency of swift implementation of the agreement, in good faith and in all its components, in order to organize peaceful, credible, inclusive and timely elections, no later than December 2017, as agreed in the 31 December 2016 agreement, and leading to a peaceful transfer of power, in accordance with the Constitution and Security Council resolution 2348 (2017), including through the full and equal participation of women. The Security Council reiterates its call for the full implementation of the confidence building measures agreed in chapter V of the 31 December 2016 agreement, some of which are yet to be implemented.

"The Security Council appeals to all Congolese actors to work for the preservation of the still fragile gains in the path of peace and stability in the DRC, it underscores the responsibility that all Congolese political stakeholders bear, especially by overcoming their differences to reach consensus and upholding the interests and well-being of their people above all other considerations, and strongly urges all stakeholders to redouble their efforts to ensure the inclusivity of all signatories of the Agreement in its implementation, including the process leading to the appointment of the Chair of Conseil National de Suivi de l'Accord. The Security Council expresses concern that, unless political actors demonstrate renewed good faith and political will to deliver on the promises they made to their people on New

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Year's Eve 2016, the DRC and the wider region are set to face an increased risk of insecurity and instability. The Security Council further calls upon all political parties, their supporters, and other political actors to remain calm and refrain from violence of any kind. The Security Council reiterates its commitment to act accordingly regarding all Congolese actors whose actions and statements impede the implementation of the agreement and the organization of the elections.

"The Security Council welcomes the progress made in the voter registration process, led by the National Electoral Commission, CENI, with the active support of MONUSCO, and calls for the continuation of these efforts in order to ensure that voters throughout the country, including in the Kasaï provinces, are duly registered. The Security Council calls for the swift publication of the electoral timetable, as called for by the African Union at its 29th Summit, which would provide clarity on both the timing and steps ahead and allow partners, including the UN, whose technical and financial support remains important for the holding of the elections, to better determine the type of assistance they need to provide and to enable the effective preparation of elections. The Security Council takes note of the repeated commitment by DRC authorities to fund the upcoming electoral cycle, and underlines that, despite the budgetary difficulties facing the Government, it remains crucial that the promised funds are disbursed as scheduled to ensure that the electoral process proceeds in a timely manner.

"The Security Council reiterates its condemnation of the violence witnessed in the Kasaï region over recent months and expresses serious concerns at violations and abuses of human rights committed in the region, including cases of sexual violence in conflict, and at the recent reports of more alleged mass graves. The Security Council takes note of statements by DRC representatives claiming that some alleged mass graves were in fact burial sites. The Security Council reiterates its grave concern at serious violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights committed by local militia in that region, including those involving recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, attacks on civilians and civilian sites, as well as attacks on DRC security forces and symbols of State authority. The Security Council further expresses concern about attacks, in contravention of applicable international law, against schools and hospitals and calls for respect to the civilian character of schools, in accordance with international humanitarian law. The Security Council further reiterates its serious concerns at the recent reports of significant increase in violations of international humanitarian law and human rights by members of the security forces of the DRC in the Kasai region, including the disproportionate use of force and the killing of civilians. The Security Council underlines that these violations and abuses might constitute war crimes under international law. The Security Council underscores the primary responsibility of the DRC Government for ensuring security in its territory and protecting its population, with respect for the rule of law, human rights and international humanitarian law, and calls on the Government of DRC to desist from any excessive use of force and on all other parties to immediately cease and reject any kind of violence, lay down their arms and engage in a peaceful solution to the crisis.

"The Security Council further expresses concern over the humanitarian crisis caused by the violence, which has displaced more than 1.4 million people internally and forced more than 30,000 people to flee the country. The

Security Council underlines the urgent need for safe and unhindered access for humanitarian actors.

"The Security Council reiterates the importance and urgency of prompt and transparent investigations into violations of international humanitarian law and violations or abuses of human rights in the Kasaï region. It welcomes the dispatch of a team of international experts to work in cooperation with the Government of the DRC. The Security Council reiterates its intention to closely monitor progress of the investigations into these violations and abuses, including the joint investigations by the Government of the DRC, MONUSCO and the United Nations Joint Human Rights Office in the DRC, in order to bring to justice and hold accountable all those responsible, and it looks forward to their report. The Security Council takes note of the recent prosecution and conviction of several DRC armed forces soldiers and a National Congolese Police agent as a first step towards countering impunity.

"The Security Council reiterates the need for the Government of the DRC to swiftly and fully investigate the killing of the two members of the Group of Experts and bring those responsible to justice, it calls upon the Government of the DRC to cooperate with the United Nations enquiries, as well as with law enforcement investigations that may be conducted by Sweden or the United States, in accordance with DRC national legislation. The Security Council looks forward to the results of the United Nations Board of Inquiry established by the Secretary-General to investigate the deaths of the two experts. The Security Council recalls its decision in paragraph 3 of resolution 2360 (2017) that acts that undermine the peace, stability or security of the DRC include planning, directing, sponsoring or participating in attacks against MONUSCO peacekeepers or United Nations and associated personnel, including members of the Group of Experts, and expresses its readiness to designate individuals and groups responsible for such attacks for sanctions.

"The Security Council notes with concern the continued activities of armed groups in Eastern DRC, including a recent increase in violence against local communities and the DRC armed forces, escalating ethnic tensions, and an increase in internal displacement.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity, and territorial integrity of the DRC.

"The Security Council reiterates its support to the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, MONUSCO, the African Union and regional organizations in helping to ensure the full implementation of the 31 December 2016 agreement, in accordance with its resolution 2348 (2017). The Security Council calls on partners of the DRC to continue to support genuine efforts by national stakeholders towards the full implementation of the Agreement. The Security Council reiterates its call to countries of the region — who four years ago signed the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region — to expedite efforts towards fully implementing their national and regional commitments under the PSC Framework, which remains essential for the achievement of lasting peace and security in the Great Lakes region. The Security Council calls upon the United Nations, the Guarantors of the Framework Agreement and the Member countries of the ICGLR and SADC to provide all the necessary support to this end."